Votalker
and
Trivia Talker

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TRIVIA TALKER

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INTRODUCTION

This package should contain:

- one TRIVIA TALKER II diskette
- this user's guide

You will also need:

- a VOTALKER C-64 Speech Unit
- a Commodore 64 personal computer
- a Commodore 1541 Disk Drive
- a monitor or TV set

To begin, install the Votalker C-64 as described in the C-64 Manual. Turn the Commodore computer on and listen for the C-64 to say, "Votalker Ready."

To play Trivia Talker II, the Votalker C-64 must be set to the following:

SPEECH MODE: ON
ECHO MODE: OFF
CONVERSATION MODE: ENABLED

Once the Trivia Talker II game is loaded, the Votalker C-64 can not be manually controlled by the keyboard. The Volume (VO#) and the Pitch (PI#) levels must be set before the game is loaded.

NOTE: After the game is loaded, you can continue to use the external rate control.

TRIVIA TALKER II

GETTING STARTED

To use the TRIVA TALKER II Game or Editor: **LOAD "MENU",** 8 and RUN

MAIN MENU GUIDE

Once the Menu is displayed, the computer will speak:

"Trivia Talker Menu - Enter Your Selection"

and will display:

[1] Editor
[2] Game
[3] Change Current Files
[4] Quit
[*]<--Enter Your Selection

The computer is now waiting for you to press a key from [1] to [4]. If you select [4], the computer will execute a NEW and return to BASIC. Each of the other selections is covered in a subsequent section.

GAME GUIDE

When you select the Game Menu option, the game program is loaded. You may then seledct to play **one** category, or **all** categories. The questions from the selected category are then read in from disk, a process taking about 10 minutes as the game program fills its buffer with questions to ask. After the initialization is complete, the Game will speak its name and ask how many points to win (100 to 500), and how many players. Respond to these prompts with a number from 100 to 500 points, and with a number from 1 to 4 players.

The Game will now ask for the name of Player 1. Type in that player's name and press RETURN. The Game will speak this name and ask if it is pronounced correctly. If correct, press [y] and the Game will ask for the name of the next player. Repeat this sequence until all Player names have been entered.

If the Game did not speak the name correctly, press [n] and the prompt will reappear with the previous spelling of the name afterwards. Change the spelling of the name using the special characters detailed at the end of the Editor section of this guide. Press RETURN and the VOTALKER will re-speak the name. Repeat this until it says the name correctly, then enter [y] to go on to the next name.

The Game program will now go into Game Play Mode, Game play consists of three: the **Wait For Player** screen; the **Ask The Question** screen; and the **Round End Summary** screen.

WAIT FOR PLAYER

In a four player game, people tend to get restless during another player's turn; they may wander off, TRIVIA TALKER is forgiving of such behavior. There can be up to a 75 second delay between questions for different players. However, this does not mean that you have to wait that long. Let's detail what's going on:

(1) The Game will speak and display whose turn is next.

(2) The Game may read in more questions from the disk to refresh its buffer (this will take about one minute).

You do have to wait for these two steps to complete. The following, however, may be skipped at will. Pressing the space bar will advance the program to the next step; pressing RETURN will advance the program to the **Ask The Question** screen. A 75 second clock in the upper left corner will display the time remaining before the question will be asked. If a player does not return before the clock expires, the remaining players can still play, and the missing player is simply penalized for missing the question.

(3) The current scores will be displayed.

(4) The subject of the next question will be displayed after a 10 second pause.

(5) The Game will prompt "PRESS [RETURN] for question", and wait for the next player to press RETURN. Note that the Game will not continue until RETURN is pressed; it's in a "holding mode" to allow the player(s) to take a break. Once RETURN is pressed, the Game will ask that player the next question.

ASK THE QUESTION

When the player whose turn it is presses RETURN, the following sequence of events will occur:

(1) The name of the player is displayed and spoken.

(2) The subject of the next question is displayed.

(3) The question is displayed and spoken.

(4) The four possible answers are displayed and spoken in a random order.

(5) The player is prompted to select what he feels is the correct answer. At this point, a 15 second countdown timer appears in the upper right corner, giving the player 15 seconds to press the letter key corresponding to what he thinks is the correct answer.

(6) The player should answer the question by pressing [a], [b], [c], or [d].

(7) SCORING - The score received for answering a question either correctly or incorrectly is based entirely upon the amount of time it took the player to answer:

Seconds Remaining	Points Received
15 - 6	Number on clock (positive for correct answer) (negative for wrong answer)
5 - 1	Number on clock for correct answer (-5 points for incorrect answer)
0	Illegal condition yielding -15 points for not answering

*Note that a negative score is possible.

*Note: If a player's score goes below zero, Votalker C-64 will not pronounce the negative portion of the number.

ROUND END SUMMARY

After all players have been given a chance to answer one question, a display will show the current scores, announce the current leader, and wait for a response from the keyboard to tell whether to continue the Game, or to stop and return to the Main Menu:

Do you want to continue [y/n]?

Press [n] if you wish to end the Game, or [y] to go on to the next round of questions.

EDITOR GUIDE

The Editor allows you to enter your own questions and answers. You may also change currently defined questions.

When the Editor loads and begins execution, it speaks its name and checks to see if the question side of the diskette is loaded. If not, it prints and speaks an error message asking you to turn the diskette over. Do this and press RETURN.

The Editor then prompts you for a "filename". A filename is the name of the category that you wish to edit. Enter the name of one of the standard files (Entertainment, Science, Geography, History, or Sports), or create a file of your own by entering a different name.

If you enter the name of a standard file (for example, Sports) the Editor will print and speak:

Using Sports

It then goes to disk and reads the header and BAM records (more about those later).

If the file is new (for example, Capitols), the Editor will print and speak:

Do you want to create CAPITOLS
[F2] yes, [F4] no

Press [F2] if you want to create a new file, or [F4] if you made a mistake or you want to enter a different filename (also see the section on CHANGING CURRENT FILES).

The Editor now creates the file on disk by opening it and asking:

Max Rec #?

Type in the maximum number of records that you will allow in the file and press RETURN (the highest value allowed is 496).

A Note About Records - A record under the Trivia System is 62 bytes; a typical question with answers will take from 1 to 4 records. Management of these different sized questions is handled automatically by the Editor.

The Editor now goes to disk and writes the last record in the file. Upon completion, it asks:

Subject Name?

Type in the subject name for this file (up to 16 characters, and press RETURN. The Editor writes out the header record, containing the Subject Name and other misceallaneous information, and the new file's initial BAM.

A NOTE ABOUT BAMs - The BAM (Block Allocation Map) is a software device for controlling the allocation of records to various resources. The BAM for a file is stored directly after the header record (record #1). The number of BAM records needed is totally dependent upon the total number of data records to be allowed in the file.

After writing out the initial BAM, the Editor returns to the Command Prompt. You may now modify/delete your own questions in accordance with the Command Prompt Menu.

THE COMMAND PROMPT

After a command in the Editor has been completed, the Command Prompt will be displayed at the bottom of the screen as follows:

(c)reate, (e)dit, (d)elete, (m)ap, (u)pdate, (l)ist, (q)uit

The Editor is now waiting for you to press a one letter command telling it what to do next:

(c)reate - Create a new question and save it to the file
(e)dit - Edit an existing question
(d)elete - Delete and existing question
(m)ap - Display the current BAM and analyze space usage
(u)pdate - Update the BAM on disk. Should be executed after entering approximately 6 questions
(l)ist - List all current questions to the printer. Do not execute this command without a printer corrected
(q)uit - Update the BAM on disk and return to the Main Menu

Following is a detailed description of each Command:

(c)reate command

This command is used to add a question to the file. After pressing the [c] key, the screen clears and displays:

Create New Question
Please enter question
?*

The cursor will remain where the asterisk is, waiting for you to type in a question. Type up to 78 characters (two lines) and press RETURN to continue on the next line. We recommend that you only type in about 38 characters per line (one screen line); anything more than 152 characters for the entire question will be truncated.

Do not type in commas [,], colons [:], or semicolons [;], as these will result in the message? EXTRA IGNORED. If you accidentally do this, make sure to space over any line with this message on it. See the section on "Editor Special Characters" below if you need to use these three character

After pressing RETURN, another question mark will appear, waiting for another line of input. This happens four times for the question. Then the following prompt will appear at the bottom of the screen:

[F1] re-edit, [F3] keep, [F4] discard, [F5] speak:

You now have four options: to re-edit the question [F1]; to keep the question and edit the answers [F3]; to discard the question entirely [F4]; or to speak the question [F5]. Assuming option [F5], the VOTALKER C-64 will speak the entered words. If the speech is incorrect, the question may be re-edited [F1] to include certain special VOTALKER characters (see "VOTALKER Special Characters" below).

If you re-edit [F1], the screen will be cleared from where you started entering the question to the bottom, with the first line of the question being re-displayed. You may then edit this line with normal Commodore screen editing. **Do not** use the cursor up/cursor down key, as it will either put the wrong input line in the question, or put a question mark at the beginning of the line. If you do this accidentally, make sure to re-edit [F1] again to fix the mistake.

After the computer speaks the question correctly, press [F3] to keep it. The screen will display:

Please enter correct answer
?*

The correct answer is always first so the game program will know which one is correct. This is only a one line string, and will be truncated to 38 characters, so do not enter more than that. All of the other rules for editing questions apply to answers also.

After pressing RETURN, the Editor will display the same prompt as when you pressed RETURN after entering the question. You should press [F5] to hear the answer, correct it with [F1] if necessary, and press [F3] to keep it.

The computer then follows the same sequence of events for the next three (incorrect) answers. Proceed in the same manner as you did for the correct answer (except entering wrong answers, of course).

After keeping [F3] the third incorrect answer, the following prompt will be displayed:

[F1] re-edit, [F3] write, [F4] discard:

Press [F1] to re-edit the entire question and its answers, [F4] to discard the entire question, or [F3] to write the question to disk.

You will be returned to the Command Prompt once you press [F3] or [F4].

(e)dit command

The command edits an existing question. Pressing this key will cause a list of the beginnings of ten of the current questions to be displayed (this takes about 20 seconds). Then the following prompt will be displayed:

[UP], [DOWN], [f2] select, [F6] quit, [F7] next page, [F8] previous page:

A white box appears over the number for the first question in the list. If the question you wish to edit is displayed, move the box up or down with the cursor up/cursor down keys until the box is over the number of the question. If the question you wish to edit is not displayed, press either [F7] to see the next page of questions, or [F8] to see the previous page.

Once you have placed the box over the number of the question, press [F2] to select that question for editing, or press [F6] to return to the Command Prompt. If you press [F2], the entire question will be read in from disk, displayed as the game player would see it, and spoken. Note that the correct answer is spoken/displayed first.

The editor will now prompt:

[F2] select, [F6] exit, [F5] speak:

If you press [F6], you will return to the Command Prompt; [F5] will result in the question being printed and spoken. If you press [F2], you will be sent to the Question Editor [see (c)reate command]. The Editor will perform exactly as in the (c)reate question section, except that it will print (at the top of the screen):

Edit Question

All the same function keys are used to re-edit the question. When editing is complete, press [F3] to write; the re-edited question will be written to disk and the old question erased from the disk.

EDITOR SPECIAL CHARACTERS

As the Editor is written in BASIC and uses the INPUT statement to get text from the user, there are certain characters which the user connot enter directly (BASIC assumes they are terminators or separators). For example, if you typed in a comma [,] in an INPUT line, the BASIC interpreter would print ?EXTRA IGNORED, and ignore all text after the comma. The same is true for the colon [:] and semicolon [;]. In order to allow you to use these characters in your questions, three other generally unused characters have been appointed to take their place. These characters are:

[(left bracket) instead of a colon
] (right bracket) instead of a semicolon
/ (slash) instead of a comma

Note that the left bracket is the shift of the colon, the right bracket is the shift of the semicolon, and the slash is two keys to the right of the comma, unshifted.

Also, please note that these special characters add a space after the separator when translated, such that:

Parsley/Sage/Rosemary/and Thyme

would become:

Parsley, Sage, Rosemary, and Thyme

that is, no space is necessary after the slash.

Similarly, use of the double quote ["] should generally be avoided, as the BASIC INPUT statement will remove it from the string. Also, typing a double quote will put the user in quote mode causing any cursor control characters to be put on the screen as graphics characters. In order to avoid confusion, do not use the double quote.

VOTALKER SPECIAL CHARACTERS

The VOTALKER does not pronounce all words correctly the first time. Most of these problems can be corrected by inserting a hyphen, or by somewhat altering the spelling of the word. Special characters have been added to the TRIVIA TALKER System so that these "exceptions" can be handled with ease, and the words can be displayed with correct spelling and no extra hyphens. The special characters are:

← (left arrow) the next character is speak only
↑ (up arrow) the next character is print only
= ([SHIFT][*]) speak only hyphen

Left Arrow - The left arrow is the key in the upper left corner of the Commodore 64 keyboard. Place this character before any letter than needs to be inserted to make the VOTALKER speak the word correctly, but should not be printed in the final spelling of the word.

Up Arrow - The up arrow is the key next to RESTORE on the right side of the keyboard. Place this character before any letter that should be printed in the final spelling of the word; the letter will **not** be spoken.

[SHIFT][*] - This is a graphics character that looks like a fat hyphen. The [*] key is to the left of the up arrow key. This character should be inserted in a word where a hyphen would fix the pronunciation. It will look like a normal hyphen to the VOTALKER, but will be deleted when it is printed in the game.

[(] and [)] - Parentheses would normally be pronounced as "left paren" and "right paren". The TRIVIA TALKER Software changes these to commas before speaking them.

An example of special character use:

The VOTALKER mispronounces the word **TOWN** as "TONE". The correct entry for the word **TOWN** is: T↑At.087U↑OWN, resulting in "TAUHN" being spoken, and **TOWN** being printed.

(d)elete command

The (d)elete Command deletes a question from the current file. It uses the same question selection system and is operationally the same as the (e)dit question command, except that the title:

Delete Question

appears at the top of the screen, and that when you press [F2] for select, you are stating that you wish to delete that question.

(m)ap command

This command displays statistics on file usage. When selected, the following information will appear:

BAM Image - This displays the entire BAM for your file, consisting of every "a", hyphen, and "e". The "e" means that record is not currently used. The "a" means that the record is the first record of a question. The hyphen means that record is a subsequent (not the first) record of a question. If any other characters appear, the BAM is corrupt and must be reclaimed using (r)ead, and (w)rite supervisor commands (see below). Great care must be exercised in this situation, since incorrect changes can corrupt your question disk.

Questions Defined - This states how many questions are currently defined in your file.

Block Usage - This states blocks (records) used, blocks available (empty), total blocks, and percentage of the file that is used.

It is a good idea to execute a (m)ap command periodically in order to monitor how much space is left, and to verify that the BAM is intact.

(u)pdate command

This command writes the current BAM to disk. Normally, the BAM is not written until the (q)uit comman is executed. In order to ensure that the BAM is kept updated when entering a large volume of questions, execute this command after manipulating approximately every six questions. This will protect you, to a certain extent, from power outages or system crashes.

(l)ist command

The list command creates a printout of all currently defined questions. DO NOT use this command if you do not have a printer attached because the sytem may hang up.

The format of a listing is as follows:

QUESTION:
EXACT: What did M◆aary hav◆e? (the string as entered)
PRINT: What did Mary have? (the string as printed)
SPEAK: What did Maary hav? (the string as spoken)

Correct Answer:
EXACT: A little lamb.
PRINT: A little lamb.
SPEAK: A little lamb.

Incorrect Answer 1:
EXACT: A green Mazda.
PRINT: A green Mazda.
SPEAK: A green Mazda.

Incorrect Answer 2:
EXACT: A German shepard.
PRINT: A German shepard.
SPEAK: A German shepard.

Incorrect Answer 3:
EXACT: A mortgage on her shack.
PRINT: A mortgage on her shack.
SPEAK: A mortgage on her shack.

Note that each string is printed three times; first, exactly as entered in the Editor; second, how it will be printed in the game; and third, how it is passed to the VOTALKER C-64 to speak.

(q)uit command

This command updates the BAM on disk and returns control to the Main Menu.

ADVANCED RECORD MANIPULATION

Two additional advanced commands are not listed on the command line because they are designed to repair question files that are damaged by catastrophic system failures. These commands are:

(r)ead and **(w)rite** each detailed below:

(r)ead command

Upon execution, the Editor prompts:

Rec # ?

Respond to this question with a number from 1 to 505. This number is the record number which will be read and displayed.

If the record number is 1, the header is read and the following information is displayed:

Number of Data Records:
Subject Name:
Number of BAM Records:

Otherwise, the Editor will simply display the data in the record.

(w)rite command

On execution, the Editor prompts:

Rec # ?

Respond to this question with a number from 1 to 505. This is the number of the record to be modified.

If the record number is 1, the header record is read and displayed as in the case of (r)ead, and the following information displayed:

Number of Data Record?
Subject Name?
Number of BAM Records?

The previous values of these variables will be displayed under the cursor; pressing RETURN will not cause a change for that variable.

If the record number is not 1, the record will be read in and displayed, resulting in the following prompt:

Data?

The previous contents of the record will be displayed under the cursor; again, pressing RETURN will not cause a change in the record. Type the information you wish to place in that record over the previous contents, press RETURN, and the record will be saved.

RECLAIMING BAM RECORDS WITH (R)EAD AND (W)RITE

A corrupted BAM record may be reclaimed in the following manner:

(1) Execute an **(u)pdate** to ensure that any question you have entered is marked as being present.

(2) Read the header record, and write down how many BAM records are present (B = # of BAM records).

(3) The BAM records are record numbers 2 through B + 1. **(r)ead** each record and find the one that is defective.

(4) Execute a **(w)rite** on the defective record, filling it with "e's", and press RETURN. This will mark, as being deleted or not used, all the blocks to which that BAM record refers.

(5) Press RUN/STOP to terminate the program. If you were to (q)uit, it would write out the memory image of the BAM, overwriting the changes you had made. After breaking out of the Editor, type:

CLOSE 2 and press RETURN

This will ensure that the data you just changed is written back out to disk.

(6) Type RUN [RETURN] to restart the Editor.

This should correct any problems with the BAM. Ensure that you do not accidentally write over your questions with the (w)rite command, as you may not be able to correct these problems as easily.

ADDING / CHANGING QUESTION FILES

If you create a new file for use with the TRIVIA TALKER package, you need to inform the game program of the new filenames to use. This is accomplished by executing Main Menu option [3] (Change Current Files).

After pressing [3], the menu will prompt you to put a question diskette in the drive. Do so, and press RETURN.

The current filenames are stored in a sequential file named "CURRENT". If this file does not exist on the diskette, you are informed that it is being created, and asked for 5 filenames to be used by the game program. Enter the 5 names which will be written to disk.

If the "CURRENT" file does exist, then the 5 current filenames will be displayed, and you will be asked which one is to be changed. Respond with a number [1] to [5], or [10] to indicate that you wish to save the currently displayed filenames. If you press [1] to [5], you will be asked for the new filename to be used. Enter the filename and press RETURN. The new current filenames will be displayed. Repeat this procedure until the 5 filenames you desire are listed, then press [0] to save the current names.

A Note About Current Files

Make sure the 5 files exist on the disk before changing the filenames, otherwise the game program will give an error and terminate. Also note that there is nothing to stop you from entering the same name multiple times in the list. This would mean that the game program would use the questions from that file the same number of times. This does not cause a problem for the game program, but it does mean that the same question will appear multiple times in the game. This can be a useful method of testing a new question file.

A Note About Your Own Question Diskette

You may create your own question diskette, or change the one provided, through use of this new option, the Editor, and the DOS wedge program from Commodore. In order to create your own diskette, load the DOS wedge, and format a blank diskette like so:

›n:' **VXTT Data** your name, XX (NOTE: bold characters should be entered in INVERSE VIDEO)

You should make sure that the diskette id (in this case, XX) is distinct from the provided question diskette and program diskette (and for that matter, all the Commodore diskettes you own), so that the 1541 will not confuse this new diskette with another one. The diskette name may be anything you wish, but the first 9 characters must be "VXTT Data"; otherwise the TRIVIA TALKER Software will not recognize it as a valid TRIVIA TALKER disk.

At this point, you may use the TRIVIA TALKER Editor to create your own question file(s) on this diskette.

Before making any changes to the provided Question diskette, make sure to make a backup copy in case it becomes corrupted.